

Standards Advisory Committee Meeting

November 30, 2000

SAC Charter Revision

The meeting opened with a discussion of the Revision to the SAC Charter. Since this is the first meeting since the SAC was re-established, it represents an opportunity to revisit the committee's purpose and function as described in the Charter. The Chair asked for comments to the electronic version that was circulated to all SAC members prior to the meeting. The following points came from the discussion:

- A question was raised about the requirement for the SAC to produce an annual report for the Executive Board. The group agreed that an annual report was not necessary, and that the Charter should be rewritten to state that information will be collected by OSS as needed to supply input to the annual NIST report to OMB on NTTAA activities.
- The Charter includes a provision for a vice-chair. The SAC must take up the issue of appointing a vice-chair at a future meeting.
- The Chair stated her view that the SAC has two primary functions: (1) Providing a vehicle for sharing standards and conformity assessment information among NIST OUs, and (2) helping NIST management developing standards policy for NIST.
- The group then adopted a suggestion that the Charter should make reference to the NIST Policy on Voluntary Standards. The SAC should also advise the director on how well the policy is being implemented.

The Chair asked that SAC members forward the Secretariat any additional comments and suggestions specifically about the SAC Charter or generally regarding other topics for regular discussion at future SAC meetings. Those comments will be included in the next draft which will then be forwarded to the E-board for approval.

Form 83

Form 83 is the vehicle NIST employees use to report their participation in standards making bodies for inclusion in the Standards Assistance and Management Information (SAMI) Project Database. The Chair requested that all SAC members remind their OU staff to be diligent about filling out Form 83 to update their standards participation activities. OSS uses the data in the SAMI database to report levels of standards activities to OMB annually, therefore this information needs to be as accurate as possible. Presently, there is incorrect data in the database that needs to be updated.

It was mentioned that Form 83 and the SAMI database does not take into account participation in industry standards consortia. While reporting these numbers will show an increase in numbers of people participating in standards activities, it is not information that NIST currently reports to OMB. Still, it would seem to be valuable to capture that

information in the database if it could be separated out for the OMB report. OSS will investigate this possibility.

The Chair stated that OSS would like to collect feedback on Form 83. Is it too long? Does it ask for too much or unnecessary information? A comment was made that some of the requested information is used for statistical reporting. Nevertheless, the Chair requested that SAC members review and evaluate the form. The form is available in paper as well as in electronic form at <http://ois.nist.gov/cd/nist83.htm> OSS needs to know if there are problems with the form (e.g., too lengthy) that cause it to be ignored.

OSS is preparing to report to OMB on NIST, Commerce and all federal agencies' standards participation. As in the past, OSS will provide to each OU a list of what the SAMI database currently shows in terms of participants and activities for each OU. In the meantime, this information can be found on line in real time.

Next, a discussion took place about ways to efficiently obtain accurate information for the SAMI database. One suggestion was to target each division chief and ask him or her to review and update their employees' participation on-line using Form 83. The Chair agreed to work through OSS to send messages to Division Chiefs asking them to do this. (Users cannot make direct, on-line changes to the information at this time since the system only allows changes to be made via completion of the Form 83.)

It was agreed that OSS will provide a demonstration of the SAMI Project Database at a future SAC meeting.

Updates on Recent Developments:

[National Standards Strategy:](#)

This document was an outgrowth of a training seminar held at NIST about two years ago. The Chair stated her view that the National Standards Strategy serves as a nice umbrella document for activities taking place in both the public and private sectors. Ray Kammer was instrumental in its formulation and is very supportive. Ray sent a letter to ANSI endorsing the NSS. NIST also sponsored workshops and held a symposium in support of its creation. The Chair was very active in these.

The Chair asked members to review the strategy and provide any thoughts about it.

A SAC member asked if the NSS will become a NIST document also. The Chair said she would consider it. Bringing the strategy out on the NIST page in the Federal Register is also being considered.

OSS will do some publicity to demonstrate that NIST is bought in to the NSS, while carefully avoiding the perception that NIST is "taking over" the NSS. This publicity

might include a brochure for distribution that includes a letter, picture and policy developed in support. It may also make sense to put the brochure on the NIST website.

The Chair stated that the next step with the NSS is to implement it. A number of actions are under way already at the federal level. Krista Johnsen from OSS, who is also the Secretariat for the [Interagency Committee on Standards Policy \(ICSP\)](#), will circulate a list of federal government actions to the SAC.

[ILAC Press Release:](#)

This [press release, dated November 2, 2000](#), was distributed for information only. It announces a newly signed Mutual Recognition Arrangement involving 37 member bodies from 28 economies to enhance foreign trade. The arrangement represents the elimination of product retesting as potential technical barriers to trade among the signatories.

[NIST Policy on Voluntary Standards](#)

By adding this item to the agenda, the Chair simply wanted to call the SAC members' attention to the existence of the policy. The document can be found on the SAC website at <http://ts.nist.gov/ts/htdocs/210/sac/pspolicy.htm>.

[Standards Training Events](#)

Krista Johnsen described two standards training events held at NIST this past year:

1. *How to Participate in the Standards Process* – This was a ½ day seminar (presented twice) that was simultaneously broadcast to Boulder. The training was well attended (an overflow crowd), and response from attendees was very positive.
2. *What Experience Has Taught Me: Lessons Learned from Standards Activities* – This was also a ½ day seminar consisting of presentations and Q&A with five NIST employees with over 100 years of combined experience with voluntary consensus standards activities. 45 attendees participated between Gaithersburg and Boulder Labs.

Agendas for both sessions were presented at the meeting and are available on the SAC web site (<http://ts.nist.gov/ts/htdocs/210/sac/sac.htm>). The Powerpoint presentations from the *Lessons Learned* workshop are also available on the SAC website at <http://ts.nist.gov/ts/htdocs/210/sac/int-training.htm>.

The Chair requested that SAC members think about what additional training might be needed in their particular OUs and forward any suggestions to the SAC Secretariat. In the meantime, the Secretariat will send the full list of available ANSI training courses to SAC Members. ANSI's full list of offerings can be found at:

http://web.ansi.org/public/services/edu/edu_blue.htm

The Chair stated that she would like to make SAC work effectively as a “virtual group” as well. This would involve more frequent communication outside of regularly scheduled SAC meetings using e-mail, communication via the SAC website, etc. The Chair asked for input and suggestions from SAC members on how this might be accomplished.

A SAC member suggested that Belinda go to OU management meetings to talk about OSS activities to raise awareness among OU Directors and management staff. Belinda stated that she had already spoken to MSEL, BFRL, ATP and MEL, and that she has plans to speak to other OUs as well.

Centennial Symposium

Date: March 7, 2001. This event is a one-day symposium to punctuate the NIST Centennial. Arti Prabhakar is scheduled to appear on the program. The agenda can be found under SAC Meetings on the SAC website at <http://ts.nist.gov/ts/htdocs/210/sac/meetings.htm>. Comments on the agenda are welcomed.

Once Around the Table

Brief updates of OU activities:

Physics Lab – Working on color imagery and developing standards for testing and evaluation of LEDs. Possible automotive applications.

(EEEL) CSTL – Pursuing international standards for medical products.

BFRL – Developing performance-based building codes.

Baldrige - Preparing to make final announcement on this year’s award winners.